

Certification Name: Certified Occupational Health Nursing Specialist

Designation: COHN-S

10-Dec-97

Society

American Board of Occupational Medicine
201 East Ogden, Suite 114
Hinsdale, IL 60521-3652

Phone: (630) 789-5799
fax: (630) 789-8901
email:

Major Requirements

Education: BS

Years of Experience: 2

Examination Required: Yes

Continuing Education Required: Yes

Maintenance Required: Yes

Directorates

Clinical Preventive Medicine
Health Promotion & Wellness

Programs

Behavioral & Health Team
Education & Training Team
Evaluation & Outcome Team
Fitness & Nutrition Team
Managed Care Team
Occupational & Environmental Medicine

American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc.



*"promoting a standard of
excellence in occupational
health nursing through
credentialing"*

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BOARD CERTIFICATION - RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Certification is a voluntary mechanism for validating a professional's knowledge and expertise in a specialty. In contrast to licensure, which assures the public of safe practice at a beginning level, certification reflects specialty practice and knowledge. By meeting the challenge of certification, the certified individual has made a commitment to a specialty and to continued professional growth and development. Certification is recognized by employers and peers as an achievement and leads to employment opportunities, advancement, and professional prestige.

ABOHN - BOARD CERTIFICATION IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING

The American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. (ABOHN) was established in 1972 to provide a certification program for occupational health nurses. ABOHN is the sole certifying body for occupational health nurses in the United States and awards to successful candidates two credentials, Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN) and Certified Occupational Health Nurse - Specialist (COHN-S). Over 8,000 occupational health nurses have been certified by ABOHN.

The work of ABOHN is managed by an Executive Director and a Director of Support Services and governed by a Board of Directors composed of Certified Occupational Health Nurses. As an independent board, ABOHN is separate and autonomous from all specialty and other professional membership organizations. ABOHN maintains collaborative relationships with these organizations. The COHN-S credential is approved by the American Board of Nursing Specialties, the national approval board for nursing certification programs.

HOW TO BECOME BOARD CERTIFIED IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSING

ABOHN offers two credentials: the Certified Occupational Health Nurse - Specialist (COHN-S) and the Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN). Applications for certification are available

upon request from the ABOHN office. The final application packet includes all the information needed to complete the application and the examination process. The certification examinations are offered twice a year, in Spring and Fall. Applications for the COHN-S and COHN examinations are due three months prior to each exam date. There is a \$50 filing fee and a \$250 examination fee.

The criteria for eligibility are set by the ABOHN Board of Directors who approve candidates for the examination. It is ABOHN policy that no individual shall be excluded from the opportunity to participate in the ABOHN certification program on the basis of color, race, national origin, religion, gender, age, or disability.

The Examination

To achieve certification, eligible candidates must be successful on a 200-question multiple choice examination which is offered twice a year for each of the two credentials. Candidates have four hours to complete an examination.

The examinations are developed and revised by the Board of Directors in consultation with a professional examination service. Examination questions are written by a panel of certified occupational health nurses, are edited by experts in testing and evaluation, and are approved by the Board. The examination content is based on the results of research designed to identify the tasks and knowledge required to practice in the specialty of occupational health nursing. This method has resulted in a valid and highly reliable examination.

Preparing For The Examination

ABOHN does not offer courses to prepare for the examination. Several organizations and educational institutions have developed courses and materials to assist individuals in becoming certified. The Board compiles a listing of many of these continuing education programs that offer content to prepare for examination, and this listing is mailed to candidates who have been accepted for examination. ABOHN neither recommends nor sponsors any specific course. The final application packet is comprehensive and includes a suggested reference list, sources of continuing education, and sample questions.

CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY - COHN-S AND COHN

ABOHN offers two credentials, COHN-S and COHN.

The **COHN** is offered to those registered nurses with associate, diploma or higher degrees or their international equivalent. The focus of this credential is on the nurse's role as a clinician; it also reflects the nurse's role as advisor and coordinator. The **COHN-S** is offered to those occupational health nurses with a baccalaureate or higher degree and reflects the nurse's role in direct care, management, education and consulting. After the year 2000, a baccalaureate or higher in nursing will be required.

Both credentials require the following for eligibility:

- Active **licensure** as a registered nurse or its international equivalent.
- 5000 hours **experience in occupational health nursing** within the five year period prior to the application deadline. This is equivalent to 2.5 years of full-time employment.
- **Current employment** in occupational health nursing for a minimum of eight hours per week or equivalent.
- 75 contact hours of documented **continuing education** related to occupational health earned within the five year period prior to the application deadline. Professional presentations, nursing leadership and publications can be used to meet part of this requirement.
- A completed **application** with fee submitted by the application deadline prior to the examination date. All criteria must be met by the application date.
- A **passing score** on the credentialing examination.

In addition, the **COHN-S** requires a baccalaureate degree or higher. After the year 2000, a baccalaureate or higher in nursing will be required.

Graduate study in occupational health or a baccalaureate completion program (after basic nursing preparation) can be used toward either the experience or the continuing education requirement. Details of these options are included in the application.

MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION - COHN AND COHN-S CREDENTIALS

Once you achieve certification in occupational health nursing, **recertification is required every five years** to assure the public of continued expertise in the specialty. Recertification is achieved through continued practice in occupational health nursing and demonstrated continuing education.

Criteria for recertification are:

- Active licensure as a registered nurse (RN) or its international equivalent.
- 5,000 hours experience in occupational health nursing within the five-year period immediately preceding application for recertification. This is equivalent to 2.5 years of full-time employment.
- Graduate study in occupational health or a baccalaureate completion program may be considered as meeting part of the experience requirement. With appropriate documentation, applicants can receive up to 1,500 hours for a graduate degree, 1,200 hours for a baccalaureate degree in nursing, and 750 hours for a baccalaureate in other than nursing. The degree must be completed in order to be applied.
- 75 contact hours of documented continuing education related to occupational health within the five-year period prior to the recertification deadline. Professional presentations, nursing leadership and publications can be used to meet part of the requirement.
- Submission of an application with fee postmarked by October 31 of the year preceding the recertification year. All criteria must be met by this date.

ABOHN BOARD OF DIRECTORS 1997 - 1998

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CALL
(630) 789-5799 • FAX (630) 789-8901

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COHN-S EXAMINATION AND CRITERIA

The COHN-S examination consists of **200 questions** that must be completed within a four hour period. The examination is given twice a year; see your cover letter for upcoming dates. Questions on the examination are distributed according to the following COHN-S roles by percentage:

Clinician	25-29%	Educator	22-26%
Manager	22-26%	Consultant	23-27%

In order to be eligible for the COHN-S examination, you must meet the following criteria:

- active **licensure** as a registered nurse
- **5000 hours experience** in occupational health nursing within the five year period prior to the **eligibility deadline** (June 30 and December 31)
- **current employment** in occupational health nursing for paid compensation for a minimum of eight hours per week or equivalent
- **75 contact hours of documented continuing education** related to occupational health earned within the five year period prior to the application deadline
- a **baccalaureate degree** or higher completed by the eligibility deadline

You will be asked to provide documentation of these criteria with your final Part II application. It is not necessary to submit documentation with this preliminary application.

COHN EXAMINATION AND CRITERIA

The COHN examination consists of **200 questions** that must be completed within a four hour period. The examination is given twice a year; see your cover letter for upcoming dates. Questions on the examination are distributed according to the following COHN roles by percentage:

Clinician	41-45%	Advisor	25-29%
Coordinator	28-32%		

In order to be eligible for the COHN examination, you must meet the following criteria:

- active **licensure** as a registered nurse
- **5000 hours experience** in occupational health nursing within the five year period prior to the **eligibility deadline** (June 30 and December 31)
- **current employment** in occupational health nursing for paid compensation for a minimum of eight hours per week or equivalent
- **75 contact hours of documented continuing education** related to occupational health earned within the five year period prior to the application deadline

You will be asked to provide documentation of these criteria with your final Part II application. It is not necessary to submit documentation with this preliminary application.